

May



The page contains extremely faint, illegible text that appears to be bleed-through from the reverse side of the paper. The text is scattered across the page and is not readable.

3.

612
A5 M98
Copy 1

A HISTORY

OF

GEORGE W. MURRAY,

AND HIS LONG

Confinement at Andersonville, Ga.

ALSO THE

Starvation and Death of his Three Brothers

AT THE SAME PLACE.

B Y H I M S E L F.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.:

SOLD FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE AUTHOR.

Price 25 Cents.

S.M.

27 200

SPRINGFIELD, MASS. :

SAMUEL BOWLES AND COMPANY, PRINTERS.

612
A5 M98

P r e f a c e .

READERS: In writing this little book, I do not intend to bring before you a work of style or language, nor a history of the War. I intend simply to present to you a short narrative of my life as a soldier in the Army of the Potomac, and while a prisoner at Andersonville. Having lost the use of both my right arm and leg, which excludes all possibility of doing any work to assist in supporting a wife and three children, I have, therefore, taken this method of raising means for their support. It is also right that you should know of the sufferings of those who fought for your country. Little do you know, unless you have experienced it as I have.

The horrors of Andersonville cannot be exaggerated. We may look back among the dark ages, and even then you will not find a parallel. With them, we could say that ignorance and superstition was the cause of their brutality, and that they did not think that it was wrong, because their religion often demanded it of them. But what excuse can be offered for such conduct in the present age, where ignorance is only

the exception, and not the general rule among us? There is none that can be offered. It was pure viciousness that had been engendered by the evil influences of Slavery.

With these few remarks, I throw myself upon the generosity of the public, and crave their aid and assistance in supporting my little family.

Yours Respectfully,

G. W. MURRAY.

History.

I WAS born in the small Town of Bovina, in Delaware County, New York. At the early age of two years, my parents came to the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, where I remained until I arrived to the age of manhood. In the meantime I learned the trade of a pattern-maker. I was the youngest of four brothers, and like all other *younger* children, I was the pet of the family, and for that reason I never left home until after I was twenty years of age, when my father and mother both died and left me without a home.

Soon after the death of my parents, I went to Boston, and worked at my trade. My mind soon became unsettled, and my fancy led me to rambling, as is the case with most young men who have no parents to guide them. I must here admit that I was *very* unsteady as far as staying in one place long at a time. I have in my ramblings visited most all the Western States, and worked in most all the principal cities of the far West. But after a very severe attack of the typhoid fever, I was led to think seriously of providing for myself a home. Acting upon these convictions, I returned to Massachusetts, and at

Lowell of the same State, I became acquainted, loved, and married the lady who is now my wife ; and shortly after I went to Indianapolis, Indiana, where I remained until 1860, and then returned to Boston and lived until the breaking out of the Rebellion ; and being the son of a man who had fought for the establishment of this our glorious Government, I thought it my duty to lend a helping hand in suppressing that wicked rebellion which threatened to destroy one of the best governments that the sun ever shone upon. Therefore, just as soon as I could arrange my business, I offered my services, aye, my life if need be, for the protection of the country from which I had received so many benefits. Myself, in company with three elder brothers, put down our names to assist in filling up the Eleventh Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, under the command of Colonel Clark, who, after the first battle of Bull Run, resigned on account of ill-health, and his place was filled by Lieutenant-Colonel Ilston, who had rendered assistance to his country in our war with Mexico. The Regiment was soon filled up and we were ready to take our departure for the sunny South. And I, bidding adieu to my wife and family, went in defense of our National Liberty. No one can tell, except those that were with me, and experienced the same trial that I passed through, the pain of separation. Imagine if you can, how I must have felt, when obliged to leave those I loved, to meet with privations, danger, and probably death, in a strange land. But should I remain inactive, and see those liberties which I had so long enjoyed, ruthlessly

plucked from me? I had an uncle who lost his life while struggling to establish this good and glorious Government; also a father who participated largely in those bloody contests of the Revolution, and those of 1812.

Under those circumstances, I deemed it my duty to go, and follow the example of my predecessors. So bidding adieu to home and friends, we took our departure, and arrived at Washington on or about the first of June, 1861, and encamped at Camp Green, and remained there until near the time of the first battle of Bull Run, when we received orders to march forward under the command of General McDowell.

I will not attempt to give a description of those battles, as they are so familiar to all, and also because they have been commented upon by abler writers than myself. But I only wish to give you a faint idea of army life. I will state to my readers, that I was not accustomed to the life of a soldier or hardships connected therewith. As I have already stated, we received orders to march, and on the 19th of July, 1861, we packed our knapsacks and camp utensils, and made our way towards the memorable battlefield of Bull Run. On the night of the 20th, we halted about two miles from Stone Bridge, and after taking some refreshments, we began to make preparations for the coming day. After all things were put in order, the officers and privates collected themselves together in groups and were soon busily engaged in conversation, which was kept up the remainder of the evening. Some talked of their homes they had

left, others of their wives and children. My three brothers and myself separated ourselves from the rest of the company, and were talking of home and loved ones left behind. Our thoughts were solemn indeed. What would be the morrow's result? In all probability, some of us who were conversing together would never behold their friends and homes again. While pondering over the probable results of the future, we were startled suddenly by the sharp crack of a musket on our front which was immediately followed by several shots all along the picket line, that made not a little excitement in the camp, and caused many to think that the coming struggle was indeed near at hand. Who of us would survive the morrow? Promises were made by comrades, that whoever should fall, the survivor should bear the sorrowful tidings to their friends and loved ones at home. A few remarks were passed between me and my brothers concerning the coming struggle. But they, not like many, did not think of home or family, for all that was left of the family were with us. But with me it was different. I had a home, and those in it that I loved. But all that I could do was to pray that I might at some period not far distant see them once more.

We made our beds and were soon in the land of dreams. Day dawned, and it was one of the hottest days that I had ever experienced while in the army. About eight o'clock in the morning the long roll was sounded, and the command was for every man to fall in to his place. We soon formed a line and marched forward to meet the foe. This was our first battle,

and therefore the one which was to test our courage, and as we marched forward, the sharp crack of the musket foretold us that our dreadful work was about to commence. We soon reached Stone Bridge, and then we beheld the dark clouds of smoke. With a loud cheer, which issued from the lips of every man, we started on a double quick until we reached the main line of battle, and joined Hooker's Division, and supported the right centre. No charges were made by our men until about twelve o'clock, when we were ordered to charge. The rebels gave back for half a mile. Several charges were made on our left by the Sixty-Ninth New York Regiment and the Ellsworth Zouaves, but the results were of no great importance. The rebel cavalry made several charges on our left, but were repulsed with great loss of life. About two o'clock the rebels were reinforced by about thirty thousand men, who took the place of their nearly exhausted comrades. The day was very hot, and we could get neither water nor food, and many of our men fell from exhaustion, still we held our position at every point. We were cheered by our officers and told to hold the position until *our* reinforcements came to our assistance, and that General Halleck was coming to reinforce us. But time rolled on and reinforcements did not reach us, and the forces were fast becoming exhausted, and it was plainly to be seen that victory for us was hopeless, unless we were reinforced soon. Our wearied line must give way to the impetuous charges of these fresh troops that were hurled against us. In vain the officers tried to rally our drooping spirits and flagging limbs. At about

half-past five o'clock our lines gave way, and a general panic was the result. Men threw down their arms, and left the field over which they had so valiantly fought for nine long, weary hours.

All was excitement; artillery and cavalry dashed over infantry, and our destruction seemed inevitable. In the meantime the Sixty-Ninth Regiment was outflanked and cut off from retreat. "Surrender or die," cried the foe, when up rode their giant commander, who flourished his sword and exclaimed, "Die before you yield."

Hand to hand the battle raged, when, by force of superior numbers, they were compelled to yield, leaving their colonel in the hands of the enemy a prisoner. We became scattered in all directions. Whether the rebels were afraid that we would be reinforced, or that they were as badly off as we were, I dare not say. At any rate, they did not follow up the advantage they had gained by our retreat, for if they had, I think that Washington would have fallen into their hands with but little exertion. No efforts were made to reorganize the demoralized troops until the next morning, when they were occupied three days before the reorganization was accomplished. Nothing of importance was done, on account of bad weather, until after General McClellan took command.

October 21st, was fought the battle of Edwards' Ferry, which resulted in no great loss to either side. Shortly after this, Lieutenant General Scott resigned and General McClellan was appointed in his stead on the 1st of November, 1861, after which nothing,

with the exception of a few skirmishes, took place until January 7th, 1862, when the battle of Blue Gap occurred, and on the 19th, the battle of Mill Springs, which was followed by another engagement with the rebels at Winchester on the 24th of March, 1862.

June 25th, was commenced the seven day's battle before Richmond. These battles were fought in the midst of heavy timber, and at times it was impossible to see the position of the enemy. The fighting on both sides was very fierce, and every inch of ground was stubbornly contested. Many of the rebels were killed by the falling limbs which were cut off by our shells. July 1st was fought the battle of Malvern Hills, which was the close of the seven day's conflict.

On the 11th, General Halleck was appointed Commander-in-chief. About this time the President issued a call for three hundred thousand men in order to fill our broken ranks. After this we marched on and fought that bloody and bitter battle of the second Bull Run, on the 30th of August. The next battle that I was engaged in was that of Antietam. It was at this place where General Burnside first showed his military skill to the best advantage, and his corps fought valiantly under his leadership.

On the 7th of November, General McClellan was relieved by General Burnside. On December 13th came the battle of Fredericksburg. We marched to the river, and succeeded in throwing our pontoons across the stream. The Seventh Michigan again led the way across, and by them was the battle opened.

After the greater portion of the infantry succeeded in crossing over, the Eleventh Corps, commanded by General Hooker, charged upon the works three times, and were repulsed with great loss each time, our artillery being stuck in the mud on the other side of the river. Therefore, receiving no support from them, we were obliged to recross.

This ended the campaign of 1862. We then went into Winter quarters. April 28th, 1863, General Hooker crossed the Rappahannock. May 2d, 3d and 4th, the battle of Chancellorville was fought, between the armies of Generals Hooker and Lee. June 13th, General Millroy was surrounded by Lee at Winchester, Virginia, and on the 28th of June, General Hooker was superceded by General Meade. July 1st the first battle of Gettysburg was fought, when the rebels advance was checked. On the 2d came the second battle of Gettysburg, and on the 3d was fought the third and final battle, which resulted in a victory for us. On the 24th of November, we stormed and captured Lookout Mountain, after a very hard fight. We were obliged to march up the steep sides of the mountain under a raking fire of the enemy, who were sheltered by their earth-works, yet in spite of their galling fire we marched steadily up to the cannons' mouths and by a rapid, sudden dash we became masters of the position, but not without losing a large number of brave men.

On the 1st day of February, my three brothers and I re-enlisted in the Eighth United States Regulars, after which the reorganization and consolidation of corps took place. After all the hardships and the

many battles I had passed through, I, like many others, became fearless of the dangers that yet awaited me. After re-enlisting in the Eighth United States Regulars, we joined the Second Division, under the command of General Wadsworth, of New York, who lost his life in defence of his country, on May 10th, 1864, and the Fifth Corps, under the command of General Warren. March the 9th, General Grant was promoted Lieutenant-General. On the 12th, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the armies of the United States. May 3d, Grant's army moved across the Rapidan. On the 5th, Lee desperately attacked our army with undecisive results. The next day Lee resumed the attack at dawn, and continued all day, but finally was compelled to withdraw; our troops held their own position. The loss on this and the day before was about fifteen thousand men on each side. On the 7th, the railroad from Petersburg to Richmond was cut.

On the 10th, came the battle of Spottsylvania; the loss on this day was ten thousand men on each side. This was the hardest and bloodiest battle that I had yet experienced, for the enemy seemed bound on death or victory. About two o'clock in the afternoon our right wing was ordered to charge the rebels' left, but it was unsuccessful, and we were compelled to fall back, and a large number of our forces were taken prisoners. My three brothers and myself were among the number.

I received a wound in my right arm, the ball entering between the two middle fingers, and passing horizontally through the arm between the two bones

of the forearm, knocking off the cap of the elbow. I also received a ball in my breast, passing through the breast-bone, and lodging just above the heart. I then started for the rear, and had gone but a short distance when a shell was thrown from one of the rebel batteries, and on exploding a piece of it struck my right foot. This last shot excluded all possibility of reaching the rear. I sank upon the ground in a helpless condition, but I cannot say that I suffered much pain at the time, although badly wounded; yet I felt very weak, faint and thirsty; the last caused me much suffering. Water! Oh! Water! What would I not have given for a few drops of that then priceless liquid? But it was not to be had for either love or money. There was no friend near me to moisten my parching lips and throat. Brother had forgotten his brother, the father his son, the son his father, though at any other time they would gladly have done all for each other they could. But excitement had swept away those tender thoughts and affections. No thought was taken of the brother who might be shot down at his side. "Victory or death" was the cry, and often from the lips of dying heroes you would hear the exciting cry of "Give it to them boys, give it to them." All was excitement.

Thus, the battle rolled on. Charge after charge was made, but to no advantage to either side. Night came on, and found the two armies still struggling for the mastery. The corps to which I belonged, had fallen back to their old position, and left me within the rebel lines. My wounds had become very painful, and I tried to crawl, but could not. I

then thought of my wife and children. I felt that I should never see them more. Then my mind swept back to my three brothers, who fought side by side with me through so many battles. Where are they? Dead? Oh my God! Can it be? Not one left to return home with the sad tidings? Thus I sank into a state of complete exhaustion. How long I remained thus I do not know, but when I awoke I found that my wounds had become very painful, so much so, that I could control myself no longer. I madly called for the assistance of some kind friend. My screams of agony brought an answer.

“Who is there?” came from out of the darkness.

“A friend, a dying friend,” I answered. “Come to me, and assist me. I will pay you well, only come.”

At that moment I heard another voice, “Advance, men.” Then I discovered a squad of men approaching, and as they advanced I saw that they were rebels. They came near to where I was lying, when the leader said:

“What do you want? and what is the matter?”

“O, I am wounded, sir; please give me some water,” I cried.

“What regiment do you belong to?”

“The Eighth United States Regulars, sir,” I replied.

“Well, we will see to you. Where are you wounded?”

“In my arm, breast and foot,” was my answer.

“Are you able to walk?”

“No.”

“Take hold of him, men, and bring him to the ambulance.”

They picked me up and carried me according to orders, the ambulance being but a short distance from me, but it had been hidden from my view by the thick bushes and shrubbery. On reaching the spot, they began to search me—I had some money, which they took, also my watch, belts, cap and coat. Then they put me in the ambulance and started for the rear, a distance of about three miles, where we halted on a nice pleasant green, and found about one hundred prisoners under guard, among whom were my three brothers, who had been taken prisoners too. They gave me some water, and bathed my wounds. The surgeon came at last, and dressed my wounds as well as he could, and left orders for my brothers to bathe them in cold water, and gave me some laudanum to soothe the pain. I suffered considerable during the night, and in the morning the surgeon again dressed my wounds, and the boys made me some coffee. Orders came to move the prisoners south as fast as possible, for the Union forces had been reinforced, and Grant was fast making his way in the direction of Cold Harbor, so the wounded were soon packed into an old lumber wagon, and started for Andersonville. We arrived there the first day of June, 1864. The weather during the day was very warm, while the nights were cold and damp.

ANDERSONVILLE PRISON.

I will now attempt to give my readers a description of the prison. At the distance of about eight hundred paces from the railroad which connects the town with central Georgia on the north, and the Gulf of

Mexico on the south, was the memorable prison. It was built on the suggestion of Howell Cobb, in 1863, and was completed in February, 1864. It is situated about fifty miles south of Macon, Georgia; its longitude, was $7^{\circ} 30'$ west from Washington; latitude, $3^{\circ} 20' 10''$ north of the equator. This piece of ground had been thickly covered with pines, but they were cut down and formed into a palisade over twelve feet high, side by side. This formed the boundary line inside of which forty thousand human beings were herded at one time. There was neither bush nor shrub left,—not even a shed or shelter to protect them from the storm, or the burning heat of the sun. Such was the condition of this horrid place, where many of my brave comrades suffered the pangs of misery, pain and death. The prison was watered by two small branches, which connected at about one thousand paces distance from the outer wall, and passed directly through the middle of the prison. On either side of the branch, the ground was descending. On one side was the hospital; on the other the sinks were erected, and the filth of both passed directly into the water that was to supply the inmates. It became so filthy, that in the month of July it was filled with animal life, which made it nearly impossible for man or beast to use it. I will not spend time in stating the horrors of that accursed, and, I might also say, damnable hole of sorrow, for many are the mothers that even weep to-day, when they hear the name of that prison mentioned. Yes, many are the wives who mourn the loss of an affectionate husband. Many are the orphans to-day, who were

made so by starvation and death at Andersonville. As I have before stated to my readers, there was no shelter, with the exception of a rampart of logs, rising from fifteen to eighteen feet in height above the surface. It measured ten hundred and two feet in length, and seven hundred and seventy-nine feet in width. It was lengthened in the Fall of 1864, to sixteen hundred and twenty feet. I think that was the last time repairs were made on it by order of the rebel, Captain Wirtz, who took command of the prison in the Fall of 1863, and remained there until its evacuation in the latter part of March, 1865, when his career of cruelty ended. During this short period, he had seen the bodies of not less than eighteen thousand brave soldiers, (who had become the victims of cruel and barbarous treatment,) laid in their graves. Did they die with those diseases which nature inflicts upon man? No. I can safely say that out of that number, *over twelve thousand deaths were caused by starvation and ill-treatment.* I will now state to my readers some of the horrors of that terrible den of suffering and cruelty.

When I arrived at Andersonville, my wounds were in a terrible condition. Still I cherished the hope of being paroled ere long, as I was disabled for life, and of no use to either friend or foe. On arriving at the prison, the commanding officer of the hospital informed Captain Wirtz that there was no more room in the hospital, and until some of the present inmates died, we would be obliged to remain in the outer quarters or old stockade. We were then conveyed to the thirty-third detachment. This prison was

divided into detachments, which consisted of from eighty to one hundred men. An officer was appointed from among the prisoners to see to keeping the number of men in his detachment and also to aid in dealing out rations to them. When we arrived at that part of the prison, I was laid on the ground, beside a large stump. The day was exceedingly warm, and I asked one of the men to give me a drink of water, when he presented me with an old horn which answered as a drinking cup. But what was worse, the water that it contained was in no condition for either man or beast to drink. It had become stagnated, and a green slime had accumulated on it. This, then, was the water we had to drink, and the only water that was to be had within those limits except when the Almighty pleased to send rain upon the earth; then, if we were provided with something to catch it with, we had a glorious treat.

My brothers were sent to the same detachment that I was, and they aided in doing all for me that could be done to make me comfortable. They set to work at erecting a sort of mud hut, and completed it on the following day, and gained the permission of one of the officers of the stockade, to gather some leaves for a bed. This was the only shelter we had to ward off the rays of the burning sun, and it answered very well for that purpose; but when a rain came, we were compelled to abandon our little cottage, as it was not water-proof. I had come to the conclusion that I should be obliged to remain here until I died. I never expected to behold the faces of my dear ones at home, never more to inhale the sweet

breezes of the Free North; for I felt that I could never recover from the condition in which I was now placed. But how true it is that "man proposes and God disposes." My eye could not penetrate the future; neither could my mind understand His will. At the time we entered, it did not seem possible that I could survive the sufferings through which I had to pass. Having three wounds to contend with, and no medical assistance, I could cherish but little hope of ever being at liberty again in this world. I tried to forget those happy days of the past, and if I thought of it at all, it was but as a dream. I prayed that my wife and children might be well cared for, and that the promises of those benevolent friends might be fulfilled.

Day after day, wore away. One by one my comrades passed into that bourne from whence no traveler returns. I was terribly startled by discovering a change in the countenances of my brothers. They were becoming thin, pale, and haggard. Oh, how plainly were despair and hopelessness pictured upon their faces. Reason taught me that we must soon part. I tried to cheer them up, and pointed out to them the pleasures that yet remained for them, but it was of no avail. They had become despondent and hopeless of the future. Sorrow and homesickness had struck deep into their hearts, and it was evident that starvation was fast accomplishing its bitter work.

Many of my readers may wonder how I survived so many of my fellow-soldiers who were not wounded. The only reason that I can give, is, that

I did not allow my thoughts to dwell upon my present condition. I had often heard eminent surgeons remark, that homesickness was the worst disease in the army. Was it surprising that it should be prevalent in such a place as Andersonville? Want of nourishing food and privilege of proper exercise would naturally tend toward melancholy and depression of spirits. Time wore on, and the wound in my breast had nearly healed over; the one in my arm was not so painful as it had been, though I was threatened with the prospects of losing my arm, and probably my life, being attacked with gangrene. I watched it closely, and kept it clean. Gangrene, as a general thing, is caused by allowing filthy matter to collect in the wound.

On the 10th of August, 1864, one of my brothers was taken with spasms, and died the same night. On the following morning, he was put into an old cart and carried to the burying-ground, which was situated on the north side of the prison, about one hundred yards distant from the stockade. My two brothers were permitted to go to bury his remains, under a guard. While looking upon his worn, emaciated countenance, it seemed that I could almost hear him say: "O, weep not for me, when I am gone, weep not for me brothers, though in prison I bid you adieu, I hope you will meet me in heaven. I have got my discharge, and am going home." This was the first of the four brothers, but not the last, whose remains were borne to the grave in this manner. Had we passed through these battles to meet such a fate—doomed to be starved to death in Andersonville?

ILLUSTRATIONS OF REBEL CRUELTY.

After the return of my brothers, Captain Wirtz passed through our detachment, and as he was passing through, a young man, who had become so weak that he could not walk, looked up to him, and addressed him as follows: "Captain, oh! captain, will you please give me something to eat, for I am dying of hunger?"

On hearing this, Wirtz sprang forward, and with his revolver, struck the poor man on the side of the head near the temple, and laid him senseless on the ground. Wirtz then exclaimed: "There, d——n your soul, you've got bread now, such as all you Yankees want."

He then passed on through the prison, cursing those who were not able to walk or help themselves. After he had gone, my brothers went to the man who had been so cruelly treated, and washed the blood from his face and tried to make him comfortable; but he soon went into spasms and died that night.

Our rations had been reduced to one-half pint of corn meal per day, and a greater portion of it had to be eaten raw. I had become very much emaciated, and very weak, and I found that in spite of all my attempts to be courageous, I was failing daily, while the death of another brother only increased my despondency.

I beheld one after another carried to their last resting-place from out our number. What was the cause? Answer, *Starvation*.

On the 24th of August, another of my brothers was attacked with the small pox, and was carried to the hospital. The doctor made incisions in his arms about one and a half inches in length, and put something in them and sewed them up. The result was terrible, and proved to be the cause of his death. Within five hours after the operation, the skin became as black and swollen as if poisoned, and in less than two days the flesh was alive with maggots. On the second day, my brother died. After this, several men were inoculated with the same matter, under pretence that it was done to prevent them from taking the small pox, and I can safely say that not one of the number lived over three days after the operation. I had recovered so far as to be able to get around with the aid of a crutch that I had made out of a piece of board, and being very weak, I thought that a little exercise would be beneficial to me in gaining strength.

INTERVIEW WITH WIRTZ.

I finally came to the conclusion that I would see Captain Wirtz, and talk to him. So with that purpose in my mind, I made my way to the gate, and asked the sergeant to give me permission to visit the Headquarters, which request he granted, and sent a guard with me. I met the Captain at the door, and saluted him. He looked at me for a moment, and then spoke to the guard in a rough, abrupt manner, saying: "What do you want here with that miserable d—d Yankee?"

The guard replied that I wanted to see him.

“What do you want?” he roughly asked.

“Captain, I am a cripple, and unable to give any assistance for or against you, and wish you to let me go from here. I am starving in this horrible place.”

Then he said, looking crossly at me: “You did not think of that when you came to drive us from our homes, and steal our niggers, did you?”

“No, my intention never was such, nor did I enlist for such a purpose.”

“You lie, you Yankee devil, that is what you came to do, but I guess you will have a high old time of it,” he said.

“I beg your pardon, sir,” I then said: “I came into the army for the same purpose I would go again, and that was to protect the government of my country that my father before me fought to establish.”

“You mean that you came to take away the rights your forefathers had established. Did you not?”

“No, sir.”

“You did, and if it was in my power, there would not be one of you alive, that was taken prisoners. I would hang you all, you d——d Yankee nigger-thieves.”

“I thank God that it is not in your power, nor ever will be.”

“Take care what you say, or I will put an end to you. I have heard enough of you already.” He then drew forth a revolver, and pointing it at my head, said: “Do you see that? I will put a hole through you, if you are not careful.”

“Do so, if you wish. Death is preferable to re-

maining in this horrid place. To be shot, is an honorable death for a soldier ; but to starve to death is not."

" Well, seeing that you are so willing to die, I will let you live. So go back, and don't come here again."

" Well, Captain, I may live to see you in a worse situation than I am. Yes, a place that I would not exchange with you for all the world."

" Oh, yes, I have heard of drowning men grasping at a straw."

" And I have heard of hanging men grasping at the air."

" After saying that, I returned into the stockade, with far less hopes of liberty than before I saw the Captain.

EFFORTS TO ESCAPE—TREACHERY.

On the 24th of October, the prisoners laid a plot to free themselves. It was a dark, rainy night, when the men rushed upon the guards and overpowered them, took away their guns, and locked them in the out-houses and vacated the premises, scattering in all directions. Many of them probably would have got away safely had it not been that there were traitors among them, who went to headquarters and gained their parole by informing the officers of the stampede. All was excitement among the officers. The alarm was given, blood-hounds were sent for, and a reward of thirty dollars per head was offered for every man that was brought back. In about three days all had been captured, and were returned, many of them being terribly lacerated by the fangs of the remorse-

less blood-hounds. There was a large number of prisoners who were not able to try to make their escape, and during the three days that the captain and his men were hunting and bringing in the poor, unfortunate men, we were not allowed anything to eat. When they had all returned, the captain busied himself in trying to find out who were the leaders of the stampede. They offered to parole the man that would tell who they were. This investigation did not seem to amount to much, nor did the reward tempt us. After making this offer, and finding it of no avail, they resorted to threatening, and we were all brought into a line, and each man was threatened with death if he did not reveal to them the leaders. But they feared death less than they did imprisonment or starvation. But there was some one, or more, who thought more of parole than honor; and through their treachery, six men were taken out and hung, and our rations were reduced to half-pint of raw meal per day. Another fiendish regulation was made soon after, which compelled each man to go after his own rations, if he was able, and if not able, he had to do without.

My third and last brother, unable longer to bear up under his misfortunes, sank into a state of idiocy, which, after a severe sickness, produced insanity in its worst and most revolting features. Oh! imagine if you can, my feelings, when compelled to stand and see him suffer that which was worse than the pangs of death, and to hear his wild, incoherent ravings, without being able to assuage his sufferings or relieve his agony. There he lay without the aid of a

physician. Scorched with fever, racked with pain, maddened by that terrible monster—hunger. Imagine if you can, what a sight it must be, to be obliged to stand and look upon your brother hour after hour and see him *gnawing the flesh from both of his arms as far up as he could reach*. My God! can I ever forget that scene of horror? After suffering thus for a few days, his exhausted system could endure it no longer. Death kindly relieved him from his sorrows.

I was alone. I had lost three brothers, who had fallen victims to the cruelty of Wirtz and his followers. Well might my courage fail, and my hopes die within me. I felt that my time must indeed shortly come. In the meantime the fingers on my wounded hand began to mortify, and had it not been for a surgeon, who was also a prisoner, I should probably have lost my hand, if not my life. He took his pocket knife and amputated my fingers at the last joint, also my thumb. About one-third of my foot also decayed and dropped off, and the cords contracted and drew my leg out of shape; in which condition it still remains.

After the 26th of February, 1865, I lost all recollection of what passed around me. The prison, (I understand,) was vacated on the 15th of March. I was left while the rest of the prisoners were sent south. On the next day, General Sherman's men arrived, and I was picked up and sent to the hospital. My weight at that time was seventy-three pounds. I had formerly weighed one hundred and sixty. My first returning recollection was at Wash-

ington, June 16th, 1865, making in all, over three months that I lay in a state of unconsciousness. Being naturally of a strong constitution, I soon became convalescent, and gained strength quite rapidly.

RETURN HOME, AS FROM THE DEAD.

As soon as I was strong enough to venture, I started for home. I found that my Captain had reported to my wife that I had been killed. Therefore when I arrived at home, I found myself quite an unexpected guest. My wife had applied for a pension, on the supposition that I was dead. Nor was it strange that it should be thought so, for my friends had not heard from me for eighteen months. Home at last! Oh, reader, how can I describe my feelings when I found myself in the warm embraces of my dear family! You, who have never been away from those you love for any length of time, can form but a faint idea of my feelings. You that have always enjoyed the pleasures and comforts can never understand the indescribable sensations which I experienced, when, after an absence of years,—after long, weary months of suffering, deprivations and distress,—I was at last permitted to surround the hearthstone with my little family.

I returned home a cripple. All the fingers on my right hand gone, and my arm, from my wrist to my elbow, partially paralyzed; nearly one-half of my right foot was in a similar condition, while the rest of it is drawn entirely out of shape, which obliges me to use a crutch; and the ball that entered my breast still remains there, and at times is very painful.

I returned home a mere wreck of my former self. Therefore, unable to work, and ashamed to beg, I have taken this method to raise a small capital to start some business, in order to enable me to support my family comfortably.

You may ask, as many have done before, "Don't you get a pension?" I answer, yes; but I need not remind you that the small sum of fifteen dollars per month will not support a man, his wife and three children.

I have fought and suffered for my country, and I sincerely thank God that it is at last free. I do not regret the steps I have taken in her behalf, and were she in the same situation to-morrow, and I was able, I would gladly fly to the rescue. I love my country even as my ancestors loved it, and accursed, thrice cursed, be the man that would attempt to destroy one of its noble institutions.

In conclusion, I append a few statistics of the Union prisoners at Andersonville, and the deaths among them, from February, 1864, to March, 1865. The record of mortality here given shows, in some degree, the wickedness of Jefferson Davis and his tools.

STATISTICS OF ANDERSONVILLE PRISON, GA.,
FROM FEBRUARY, 1864, TO MARCH, 1865.

MONTH.	No. of Prisoners.	No. in Hospital.	Av. No. of Deaths Daily.
1864, February, . . .	1,600	33	
March, . . .	4,603	909	9
April,	7,875	870	19
May,	13,486	1,190	23
June,	22,352	1,605	40
July,	28,689	2,156	56
August,	32,193	3,709	99
September, . . .	17,733	3,026	89
October,	5,885	2,245	51
November, . . .	2,024	242	16
December, . . .	2,218	431	5
1865, January, . .	4,931	595	6
February, . . .	5,195	365	5
March,	4,800	140	3

The greatest number of deaths on any single day, was on the 23d of August, 1864, and was 127, or about one death every eleven minutes.

LIBRARY OF CONGRE



0 003 453 221

7

1 - 1
(

ARY OF CONGRESS



0 003 453 221 7



Permalife®
pH 8.5